



ORGANIZING A TOWN HALL MEETING

Sample Pitch Letter

[Name of editor]

[Title]

[Name of news organization]

[Address]

[City, State, ZIP]

Dear [Name]:

Alcohol use among children and adolescents starts early and increases rapidly with age. In 2008, 15.9 percent of 8th graders, 28.8 percent of 10th graders, and 43.1 percent of 12th graders reported drinking an alcoholic beverage in the previous month. Heavy drinking is a problem at all three grade levels. Among eighth graders, about 1 in 20 (5.4 percent) reported being drunk at least once in the past month. Nearly 1 out of every 7 10th graders (14.4 percent) and about 2 out of every 7 12th graders (27.6 percent) reported being drunk at least once in the last month.¹

To help educate young people and caring adults about the risks associated with underage drinking, the Federal Government's Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Prevention of Underage Drinking (ICCPUD) is supporting a series of Town Hall Meetings. The meetings will take place in communities across America the week of March 22–March 26, 2010, which coincides with April's Alcohol Awareness Month. [Insert local statistics]

Among young people, the prevalence of underage drinking increases with age, making it more important than ever to begin teaching youth at an early age about the dangers of alcohol. On [Date] at [Time], [Your organization] and [Guest spokesperson] will be sponsoring an Underage Drinking Prevention: Town Hall Meeting at [Location] to raise awareness of the risks of underage drinking. The Town Hall Meeting is a national effort by ICCPUD to inform youth, parents, caregivers, and other adults about the harmful effects of underage drinking.

Please attend our Town Hall Meeting to help increase community awareness of the dangers of alcohol use by our youth. Children in our community need to know how to reject underage drinking and how damaging underage drinking can be to their health, now and in the future.

Spokespeople will be available for interviews either before or after the event. I would be pleased to put you in touch with them.

Sincerely,

[Your name]

[Your title]

[Your phone number]

[Your email address]

¹ National Institute on Drug Abuse. 2008. *Monitoring the Future: National Results on Adolescent Drug Use—Overview of Key Findings. 2008* (electronic version). Retrieved from <http://www.drugabuse.gov/PDF/overview2008.pdf>.